NewsRelease

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

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NOTE TO EDITORS:
PANEL TO SHARE LANGLEY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO COLUMBIA ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

News media are invited to a lecture Oct. 23 at which panel members will discuss NASA Langley Research Center's contributions to the space shuttle Columbia accident investigation.

The talk will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the H.J.E. Reid Center auditorium at NASA Langley in Hampton, Va. The four panel members are Mark Saunders, director of the Space Access and Exploration Program Office; Charles Miller, head of the Aerothermodynamics Branch; Mark Shuart, director of the Structures and Materials Competency; and Charles Poupard, head of the Applied Technologies and Testing Branch.

Media Opportunity: Members of the media who wish to attend should contact Kimberly W. Land at (757) 864-9885 or 344-8611 (mobile) to arrange for credentials.

NASA Langley made significant contributions to the accident investigation using:

- Ground-based testing in hypersonic wind tunnels, and computational fluid dynamics computer codes to determine potential foam impact areas.
- State-of-the-art of nondestructive technologies to evaluate the spray-on foam insulation and its bond to the external tank surface.
- Analyses and tests addressing failure scenarios and developing a list of causes and recommendations, which will be appended to the external tank investigation report.

Langley also took part in the Interagency Photo Working group that was instrumental in digitally enhancing photographs of the launch. The enhanced photos helped investigators understand the impact of the foam on the shuttle during ascent.

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Finally, Langley participated in debris collection in Texas, with five teams helping over a two-month period. Ground crews searched some 672,000 acres and collected more than 84,700 pounds of debris, or 38 percent of the weight of the shuttle.

For information about this and other lectures, visit the Colloquium and Sigma Series Lectures web site at:

shemesh.larc.nasa.gov/Lectures/

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